

The Trial of Bill Haywood Clears the Air

WAS the I. W. W. verdict at Chicago limited in effect to a declaration against any element in American life that interfered with America's will to war? Or did it go further and become finally a condemnation of a social group in rebellion? Newspaper comment divides in its expression on these two points. Some editorial writers prefer to leave the social questions, so fiercely raised by the I. W. W. leaders in their defence, untouched until the war has been put out of the way. Others find in the verdict the hostile attitude of the American people, long held in abeyance, toward a group that "breaks all laws in an effect on the prosecution of the war. "It clears the air" is a phrase which presents itself frequently.

"The New Haven Register" says "the jury at Chicago spoke for the American people." "The New York Sun" calls it a "victory for good order," and "the seal of swift condemnation upon those who have dared to adopt treasonable methods to accomplish a criminal purpose," is the characterization of "The Philadelphia Public Ledger."

The trial was marked by several unique qualities. It took a long time, for one thing—138 days, to be exact; and in that time no less than 7,500,000 words of testimony were taken. The defendants, of whom there were a hundred, were allowed a great deal of latitude in which to explain to the jury the aims of their organization and the social purposes they wanted to accomplish and see realized. Yet, so weighed down, the jury did not hesitate long in bringing a verdict. The jury was out only a little more than an hour.

"The New York Evening Post" points out that the direct charge against the defendants had nothing to do with fomenting social unrest, that they were "indicted" under the law of the land for hindering the war effort of this country," and it concludes that "America has made up its mind to wage the war to a triumphant end. Anybody who gets in the way will get hurt."

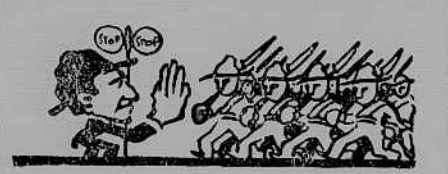
In this fashion "The Post" dissects the matter and separates the issues:

"A great many side issues were raised at the Chicago trial. These did not enter into the merits of the case. Vivid pictures

were drawn of the social maladjustments in which the I. W. W. had its origin. This kind of reasoning we cannot ignore. It has to be attended to in its place. Unrest and a sense of injustice pervading any part or class of the community are grave symptoms which the skilled political physician will not neglect. If blind prejudice against the lawful aims of the I. W. W. exists harmfully anywhere, public effort must be made to remove it. That members of the organization have been abused, and wrongfully deprived of their rights, in some parts of the West, there is the best of reason to believe, for the President of the United States was moved to protest against the kind of mob violence to which some of them were subjected. There is undoubtedly work in all this for the social reformer and for the statesman. But all these things stand apart from the sole sharp question put before the jury at Chicago. And the answer given is unmistakable. The law against seeking in any way to cut the nerve of the government's war efforts will be sternly upheld, be the offenders who they may."

"The Springfield Republican" agrees with this view, writing thus:

"The present economic and social system was not on trial; the government did not seek to justify capitalism or discredit syndicalism and socialism. Whatever economic wrongs the I. W. W. is a symptom of or a protest against is a subject for searching inquiry, for its existence undoubtedly corresponds to economic maladjustments

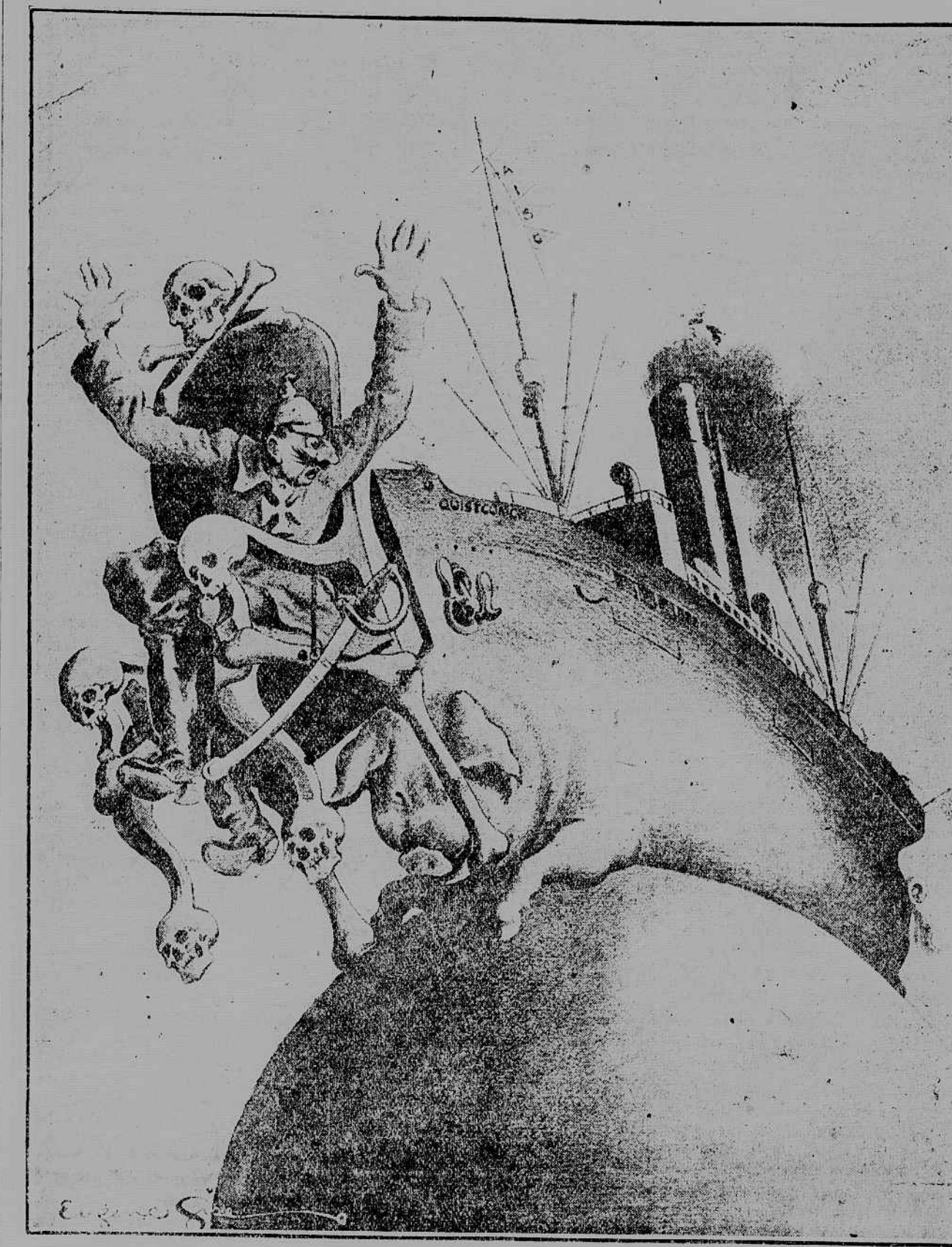


which must be remedied. Meanwhile it must be said that if the government is attacked or wilfully obstructed while engaged in a foreign war it has as much moral right at least to protect 'itself as a Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia has to massacre its enemies in a struggle for existence."

But this paper also draws a moral from these proceedings, and admonishes the nation to view the trial as a symptom of wrongdoing somewhere which cannot be entirely forgotten. It continues:

"In our patriotic exaltation while the great war is in progress, the fact that such persons as Haywood and his comrades flourish in the land comes to most of us as a shock. Bitter resentment against them is a natural feeling to entertain. Yet there is a view of the case that should not be ignored. The war lays pitilessly bare the cancerous growths in our national life. Race riots and barbarous lynchings occasionally remind us of America's sad failure in the assimilation of the

Over the Top at Hog Island



—From The Hog Island News.

negro. The I. W. W. champions of industrial sabotage and uncompromising class war disclose the tragedy of an industrial class so weak, friendless and lowly that it rejoices in this irresponsible and anarchistic leadership.

"Let even the Haywoods teach us something. Let us counteract their passion for anarchy with our own passion for democracy and justice. By reaching down to the depths and rescuing from exploitation and oppression the humblest and most helpless of wage-earners we may put the revolutionary I. W. W. out of business—but not before by any manner or means."

"The Boston Transcript" is convinced that such a trial earlier would have saved sections of the West from taking the law into their own hands against lawless organizations. It calls the trial and its verdict "the better way—the American way—of dealing with those among us who would stab in the back our defenders with the colors and abuse the hospitality of all Americans." "The Philadelphia Inquirer" observes that "at a time when the nation is throwing all its energies into a war to defeat barbarity it has little condonation for outrages at home," and terms the result a "blow at anarchy." "The Pittsburgh Dispatch" also eliminates any protection that the organization likes to take from its social purpose, and declares:

"The question of origin of the organization, the existence of provocative industrial conditions, the offered excuse that lawlessness was invoked against lawlessness had nothing to do with the issue at bar, which was whether they had been engaged in a campaign subversive of the law of the land. The effect was wholly disloyal and obstructive to the nation's war programme."

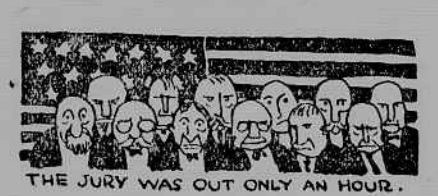
"The San Francisco Chronicle" likewise ruled out the I. W. W. programme on the ground that "these people are on trial, not for their beliefs, but their acts. Society is only indirectly concerned with what they think, but is greatly concerned in what they do."

"The Portland News-Press" recognizes that in times of peace "this and similar enemy organizations have been tolerated for one reason and another and not always a worthy one. But when the nation is really in peril and the Hay-

woods and others of their ilk have joined hands with foreign foes to accomplish our ruin the spirit of toleration vanishes and the arm of the law is invoked." This is likewise the comment of The New York Tribune, which declares:

"Confusion, eloquence, generalities of class appeal, were waved out of the window. The twelve Americans took the straightforward interpretation of the acts charged. Whatever other aims the defendants may or may not have had, they had sought to obstruct our fighting ability. There was but one verdict possible. The result was a splendid vindication of the jury trial. It was a stirring expression of American resolve in the war. It will sound across the continent. It will help clear the air of much half-hearted defeatism."

"The New York Times" goes further



and finds a judgment in the verdict on other matters besides war obstructionism:

"This verdict of a Chicago jury will do more to open the eyes of the American people to the ugly peril latent in the propaganda of this anarchistic and enemy-controlled organization than repeated acts of mob retribution, which scotch the reptile in the grass, but do not stop the flow of its venom."

"It was high time to make an example of the mephitic agitators of the I. W. W. There is a lesson in it for the pseudo-patriots who, by their folly or worse, give aid to the enemy; for the spies in ambush, for the agents and publishers of sinister German propaganda, for the mean-hearted and loose-mouthed radicals, for the seditious hypocrites masquerading as pacifists, and for the whole brood of traitors, disloyalists and enemy aliens."

"The Philadelphia Public Ledger" denies the altruistic aspirations of the I. W. W. and declares that its followers have been duped by it. As a matter of course—

"there will be small sympathy for the men who are thus held responsible for the excesses of the I. W. W., however much to be commiserated are the hosts of ignorant and

unfortunates who were their dupes, and who were deceived into believing that the I. W. W. was a champion of the downtrodden and the unfortunate, the instrument by which liberation was to be won from the bondage of oppressive labor conditions. There is comfort in the knowledge that the great body of American workingmen and women have seen with clear vision the criminal aims of the I. W. W. This organization drew its inspiration from a spirit of anarchy foreign to the American spirit and it found its dupes chiefly among that body of migrant labor which is admittedly too numerous for the wellbeing of the nation and which was by reason of its hardships a ripe field for the sinister propaganda of the Haywoods and their kind."

"The defendants present apparent inconsistencies that are easily explained. Anarchists who bow to a 'swivel-chair king,' workmen who wage war on workmen even to the death, champions of the proletariat whose principles would destroy the people, they show the consistency of their master minds in one thing which is the key to all the rest—their blow at the foundations of our government; their war on the waging of our war."

"True, the evidence pictures acts transcending even sedition in scope—crimes that, if the plotters' power equalled their malevolence, might deal the whole world a staggering blow for years to come. But the weak brains that dreamed of social betterment by firing food that people might starve, of turning forests into deserts and of killing honest workmen with their devilish contrivances were well under control of strong minds that willed by any desperate means the failure of the war for freedom."

"The New York World" wrote:

"It was the hand of Kultur that gripped the torch and bomb and fashioned the evil inventions of sabotage. It was the conspiracy against the United States and against the triumph of its just struggle, running like a blood-red thread through the mazes of this sensational trial, that guided the jury to its patriotic verdict."

"It is a verdict that should clear the air. It shows an America roused, no more hesitant of grappling with foes at home than it is fearful of facing its foes on the firing line. It is a credit to the court, to the Department of Justice and to the plain common-sense and American spirit of the communities from which juries are drawn. Not with their consent is America to be stabbed in the back."

Let's Take Off Our Coats and Get It Over!

GENERAL MARCH has not failed to catch the national imagination. His brief description of a great American army smashing a way through the Western front to victory and to war's end has crystallized opinion in favor of the immediacy he advocates. Newspapers evince impatience with any obstruction to the maximum war effort. "The New York World" calls his projected effort for next year

"the Victory Drive." "The Kansas City Journal" calls the spirit behind the words of General March "the winning spirit" that will "find a responsive echo in every true American heart." "The Des Moines Register," anxious that "the final blow may be struck soon and that it may descend with overwhelming power when it is launched," points to some of the reasons for moving swiftly and crushingly:

"American strength should be sent to France as rapidly as it can be mobilized, in order that the final blow may be struck soon and that it may descend with overwhelming power when it is launched."

"We do not want this conflict to continue as a war of attrition, in which each side will continue to lose heavily and the one which has an army left at the last will win. We are certain to win if that is the policy, but it will be at terrible cost to ourselves and will mean the practical obliteration of the manhood of France and England."

"The way to win a victory is through the obtaining of so vast a superiority in striking power that German military strength can be broken by a strategic defeat."

"The way to win the war is to make it a contest between a heavyweight and a lightweight. Where differences in power are to be measured by the casualty list, there is no place in war for the rules of sportsmanship which forbid a big man to punch a weaker adversary. War, in its larger aspects, isn't sport. It is grim business, and our duty is to win it with as speedy and complete a decision as may be obtained, at the least cost possible."

"The Philadelphia Inquirer" does not let the prospect of victory blind it to the difficulties that lie in the way, arguing thus:

"To create this army and move it there must be a tremendous amount of work done. All the more need for coal in prodigious quantities. All the more need for ships and munitions. We will all have to come down to wearing shoddy next winter, for the government needs every pound of wool for clothing for the soldiers."

The New York Tribune writes:

"In mere physical terms the undertaking upon which, according to General March, 'the United States government has been asked by her allies to embark,' is without parallel in the modern history of human effort. To France in ten months, 3,200,000 men, as soldiers, who to-day are perform-

ing ten thousand separate civil tasks, consuming non-essentials, doing countless unproductive things, such, for example, as writing editorials! The difficulties are enormous. But they are technical only. They are difficulties inherent in time, environment and material. The will shall overcome them."

"If we succeed with this programme the end of the war will be in sight ten months from now. There is no sacrifice we cannot afford to make to bring it off. We wish progress could be measured daily, as in a Liberty Loan drive, so that every day we should know by the rise or fall of the government's curve of achievement whether yesterday's mass effort had been above or below the mark."

"The Kansas City Journal" expresses its gratification that at last we have a definite programme on which to proceed. Yes, it rejoices—

"there is something definite and concrete. It is really in the nature of a programme of war work that the nation is testing for itself. And it is obvious to any thoughtful person that until the United States does map out an adequate course of action and adhere to it, the war will not be won by the Allies. It appears that Secretary of War Baker is in full accord with these views and it is hardly thinkable that General March would have uttered them without official sanction."



"The New York World" makes clear that the matter of victory is up to America and that delay is dangerous:

"It is a matter of common knowledge that the United States must provide the new armies that are necessary to win the war. We have no right to expect the British and the French, in view of all that they have gone through, to do more than repair their wastage and hold their forces up to the present military strength. The additional power that is needed to deliver the decisive blow must come from the United States, which is abundantly able to furnish it."

"Congress cannot afford to palter with this measure. Its supreme obligation is to meet the situation squarely and honestly."

In the meantime Germany's answer to the increasing part of American soldiers in the defeat of German armies is to cry out loudly at America's "war craze." The "Frankfurter Zeitung," looking long and earnestly at the United States across the waters, turns from the spectacle sadly to the more comforting view of Germany, hindered from making effective war by her love of peace. This is what "The New York Times" has to say of this German comment:

"If the universal resolution, the common consecration, the aroused spirit of battle that fires the West as well as the East in these states, can be termed a 'war craze,' then the inspired German sheet is right. The whole country is aflame with a rage to beat down the Prussian military power into the dust, and end for all time its rapacity, its cruelty, its greed for domination over the bodies and souls of men."



The Big Wallop Is Coming

—Detroit News



Bad Days for Bolsheviks

—New York Herald